

PITCHING PROBLEMS

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INT. FAMILY HOME

A 6 year old girl is in pig tails and a party hat looking plainly at a birthday cake within a candle lit room. We hear a woman talk over the scene.

CORA (V.O)

My nan always used to say that life
comes full circle more often than
you think.

Friends and family are gathered round her. Mouths are agape but no one is singing.

CORA (V.O) (CONT'D)

It was always just another one of
her sayings like
(imitating)
'If you sit around on your back
end, all you will get is more back
end to sit around on.'

We begin to look around the table from person to person as the voice over continues. A young boy eager to tuck into a mountain of chocolate frosting, a teenager who has better places to be, another young boy barely seeing over the table waiting patiently, an enthusiastic uncle sporting a red sponge nose, a father documenting, an emotional mother.

CORA (V.O) (CONT'D)

We're shaped by experiences and the
people we meet. And how can our
childhood not feed into our adult
lives every now and then? I got it.

Grandpa brings his slipper down on a large spider perched on the cake. It splatters over the girl.

EXT. CAMP GROUND - NIGHT - YEARS LATER

Around a tiny camp fire is CADE [20, South African, excitable daydreamer], JOE and BECKY [a couple in their late 20's, he rolls with her punches].

GRACIE [75, swears like a sailor with the tattoos to prove it] has a manical expression as she stands over the fire with a wooden spear. CORA [early 30's, a competitive workaholic] stares through the flames, eyes wide with anxiety.

(CONTINUED)

CORA (V.O) (CONT'D)
It just took twenty-six years for
the words to resonate.

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING 30TH FLOOR

MR SUIT, an American man [mid 40s, with slicked hair and a neat mustache] bangs his fist against a large window. As he turns to face the room, we sink through the glass to face him.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING A BOARDROOM

MR SUIT
If I don't have this ad wrapped and
ready to run by tomorrow, all your
asses are on the line!

Around a long table fit for twenty are crammed, thirty smartly dressed office workers, typing and scribbling furiously. Even some of those standing are holding their laptops and tablets in one hand working awkwardly.

We follow Mr Suit as he marches out of the room.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING WORK FLOOR

Mr Suit stomps his way through a large room filled with clusters of empty cubicles and desks. He carries on marching and huffing until he reaches the door of a private office. He opens the door and lets it go in our face. Slam. It then opens for us with the hand of someone following closely behind.

INT. MR SUIT'S OFFICE

MEL [mid 30s, knows she's pretty, if she doesn't like you you'll know about it] strides into the room. Mr Suit takes a cloth from his breast pocket and shines his name plaque. It's his calming mechanism.

MEL
It's the new intern isn't it? I
don't mind telling him to pack up.

MR SUIT
Nathanial? No. I don't hate him.

(CONTINUED)

MEL

Well, I've really been taking the time to train and encourage him. I can't nanny him forever though. He's not allowed a desk yet so there's nothing to pack. He'll go quietly.

MR SUIT

No.

Mr Suit considers this for a moment.

MR SUIT (cont'd)

No, he's the only one with his head screwed on around here.

MEL

Mm I don't know. He always takes three sugar packs from the cafe and I know for a fact he only uses one. They may be complimentary but it really makes you question his integrity.

MR SUIT

No no, Emmanuel's fine, it's the rest of them. The wage weasels. What am I paying them for? Do they think our competitors are out there just idly twiddling their fingers, fueling the next big thing with chips and chatter!?

We sink through the glass once more.

EXT. 30 FLOORS ABOVE LONDON

We're in free-fall, hurtling down floor by floor on our back, important buildings leering above. Jolt then black as we meet the ground.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING B BOARDROOM

Cora has one hand stretched over her eyes rubbing her temple, tired and stressed. In a stylish white blouse tucked into black, tailored trousers, she is leading a company brainstorming meeting. Sat at a long table fit for twenty are four suited workers, TODD, MARK, JENNA and CRAIG, slightly disheveled and slumped in their chairs, gnawing on pens or leaning on hands. There is a sparse centerpiece of

(CONTINUED)

doughnuts and water jugs. Paper is strewn across the table. The four have been here far longer than they had hoped to be. By Cora, on a large notepad is scrawling of primary school equivalence (Dog-bark-bones-fetch etc.)

Todd, a young Australian man is mid suggestion.

TODD

Dogs chew on them, we have them.

Cora's positivism is fading but she forces an upbeat tone to encourage the group. It's verging on condescending.

CORA

Bones is already on here, Todd.
What other images will appeal to
pet owners?

Running with his thoughts, Todd continues enthusiastically, convinced on a great idea.

TODD

This pup is so sick of its food it
opts to stealing his owners fake
leg, really chows down on it, a
Constant disruption to this blokes
life. *Until* it eats our stuff.
Loves it, can't get enough. Now the
two are best buds running around
the park and stuff.

With his hand in the air as if he were magically forming a banner for the others to read.

TODD (CONT'D)

Ruffs pure. You can't beat real
meat.

The other three take a break from staring vacantly into the room to observe Cora.

CORA

It's...interesting. I'm not sure
it's the right angle to spin on
this occasion; could be offensive.
Keep thinking outside the box
though, we're getting somewhere.

Jenna to Craig.

JENNA

Yeah, it hasn't been done before.

Cora tenses, ignoring the comment.

(CONTINUED)

The door begins to open, a head pokes into the room followed by a knock. The group straighten up and Cora steps in front of the note board. GEOFF picks lint from his £300 sports jacket. In jeans, he enters, the only one secure enough to 'dress down' on casual Friday.

GEOFF

Hope I'm interrupting. I can feel the creative energy guys. Just need to borrow Cora, but I trust you will continue the flow of ideas in her absence.

A chorus of forced, positive responses. As Geoff and Cora leave, the group feigns a productive discussion. The door closes, then silence.

INT. OFFICE HALLWAY DAY

Cora and Geoff stand in a corridor lined with entirely glass fronted office's. Over Geoff's shoulder, Cora has a view of two workers stood inside one, around a computer. During the conversation Cora is distracted, occasionally glancing into the office.

GEOFF

All going well?

Cora nods.

GEOFF (CONT'D)

-Good good. Now I hate to rehash this, no one is more glad than me that the firm dropped the lawsuit. Not because of our rep or the settlement we would have had to fork out, but because of you. We were all worried about your well being, Cora.

The two workers, behind Geoff in the transparent office appear to be laughing.

GEOFF (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Complete desperation and greed on their behalf. They were envious of our global attention. I'm just sorry they took it out on you.

CORA

It's all been settled though. Hasn't it?

(CONTINUED)

GEOFF

Yes absolutely. God, no, you're not in trouble. Persay, well, I mean

He trails off.

GEOFF (CONT'D)

I think you need a nice break. You're one of the best CD's we've had. You just seem a little distracted lately.

Cora darts her attention away from the office behind him and back to Geoff.

CORA

I'm fine, honestly. The session is going great, it's going to go viral I'm sure of it.

Another worker is making their way down the corridor.

GEOFF

I sat with the board yesterday and they thought after all the attention surrounding your case it was best you sat this one out.

He places a reassuring hand on Cora's shoulder

GEOFF (CONT'D)

I won't see you let go.

CORA

Let me go!

The volume of Cora's reponse causes Geoff to shoot his hands up and look to the approaching worker as a witness. Cora glares at him and he lowers his hands, cupping them beneath his waist.

CORA (CONT'D)

Let me go?

GEOFF

Look, you just need to take a week away.

CORA

Geoff, you said it yourself, I've done nothing wrong.

(CONTINUED)

GEOFF

An all expense paid holiday, a relaxation retreat. I wish they would ask me.

Cora is agitated, torn between fixing her attention on Geoff or the two workers, who unbeknown to her why, are grating on her.

GEOFF (CONT'D)

You just need to prove that you have put the events and the erratic behaviour, I didn't want to mention it but it is still a concern, behind you.

The view of the computer screen is no longer obstructed. Cora's face fills the monitor. They're laughing at her. She moves past Geoff without a word and enters the office. As the door clicks closed they turn around to see Cora approaching. They fumble for the mouse and escape key.

CORA

Don't you dare close it. From the beginning.

The apprehensive worker reluctantly replays the video. A bemused Geoff has followed Cora into the office. The four of them watch the screen, three wincing as Cora stares intently. Like a train wreck they can't look away from, an auto tuned song has been created from an interview in which Cora flies off the rails.

REPORTER (VIDEO)

There is a likeness between the two adverts.

CORA (VIDEO)

Body spray and beer. Are you crazy? How could we have expected this?

REPORTER (VIDEO)

There are very similar themes. It wouldn't be the first instance of campaign copying.

CORA (VIDEO)

What, you think we sneak around for the secret marketing ingredient, like we're after Willy Wonka's fu-

The office phone rings over the video.

(CONTINUED)

CORA (CONT'D. VIDEO)
-ing chocolate

The worker promptly pauses it.

WORKER
Sorry. I have to take this.

Geoff passes a leaflet to Cora.

INSERT- Brochure

In bold it reads "Healing Wilds" with a collage of people hiking across a picturesque landscape, being massaged, exercising, Kayaking, and generally looking accomplished with forced elation.

GEOFF (O.S)
Rejuvenation of body and mind.

EXT. CAMP ENTRANCE - DAY

The brochure is lowered to reveal a dirt path stretching passed some wooden lodges. Cora wheels her luggage towards a trail of smoke filtering through the trees. She talks into a mobile holding it with her shoulder as she folds the brochure into her bag. Rain clouds loom.

CORA
After everything I've done for them
they can't even fly me out
somewhere nice for the week.

INT. MEL'S OFFICE- SAME TIME

Mel has her bare feet up on a desk with her name on it.

MEL
I know it's no beach side resort
but it's better than putting up
with Hammond's shit all week.

INTERCUT between Cora and Mel

CORA
No, it's a dump. I don't think they
even have a sauna. There's no one
here.

(CONTINUED)

MEL

Not even any of those overbearing
tree hugging weirdo's?

CORA

No. It's pretty eerie.

There's a knock at Mel's office door.

MEL

Just a sec.

She covers the receiver and takes her feet off the desk.

MEL (CONT'D)

Yes?

DANIEL her apprehensive assistant enters.

DANIEL

I've finished compiling the
research for the briefs and Mr
Flint-

MEL

Daniel, I'm a little busy right
now. Just slide the stuff under my
door in future.

He hovers by the door with a file in his hand. Mel shoos him
away. He dare not get closer to hand over the file. Daniel
closes the door behind him. Papers scatter as they are slid
under the door with slightly too much force. Mel tuts and
returns to her lounging position.

MEL (cont'd)

(into the phone)

He is driving me up the wall.

CORA

I didn't stuff my boots with enough
mini liquor to last me a week, Mel.

MEL

You have signal so if you're really
miserable call me and I'll find a
way to break you out.

Cora's heavy suitcase overturns as its wheel hits a
protruding rock.

(CONTINUED)

CORA

Argh, this stupid case! I'll have
to speak to you later, bye.

She pockets her phone and kicks the case struggling to turn
it back.

ELLIOT approaches (35, eccentric man-child). He is dressed
as a bear from the neck down.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

Hello.

(creating his own echo)

hello hello. You hear that? Nature.
Isn't it so relaxing out here away
from the city?

A low flying plane sounds overhead.

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

I'm Elliot but you can call me
Cheif.

CORA

Hi. Cora.

She extends her hand. Elliot pulls her into an embrace. Cora
winces like a puppy being squeezed by an overzealous
toddler.

ELLIOT

Warm woodland welcome, Camper!

EXT. CAMP HUB- DAY

At a picnic table, Cora deliberates the lesser of two evils,
pizza or sausage rolls. A few trays down from her are Joe
and Becky the bickering newlyweds.

JOE

It would be nice to have pet names
for each other. Elaine says we
should be more outwardly
affectionate.

BECKY

Oh and Elaine knows everything.

JOE

Well she is our marriage counselor,
Becky. You don't even call me honey
or sweetie anymore.

(CONTINUED)

Cora eyes a platter of vegetable sticks behind Becky. She leans on the table bench, stretching for them while trying to steer clear of the arguing couple. Becky keeps leaning in the way. Cora waits for her to sit forward again, timing her move like she's jumping into a skipping rope. Cora goes for it. She collides with Becky. Cora's food drops from her plate.

CORA

Sorry! I misjudged the distance to the carrots.

BECKY

It's ok.

Becky begins picking up the food from the floor.

CORA

Please, leave it there. Not like it matters if we get ants.

BECKY

Don't want to attract more bears though.

Cora becomes concerned. Becky points to Elliot still wandering about, this time in full costume.

JOE

How are you finding camp?

CORA

Still adjusting. Everyone seems friendly enough. Have you been here long?

BECKY

First day. I'm Becky.

Cora shakes her hand.

CORA

Cora.

She moves to Joe.

BECKY

And this is Babe.

Cora proceeds to shake his hand.

(CONTINUED)

BECKY (cont'd)
Like the pig.

Becky looks smugly to Joe who is resigned and barely reacts.
There's an uncomfortable pause.

CORA
Nice meeting you. I better grab a
seat before they're all gone.

As she makes her way over to the campfire Cora is
intercepted by Cade.

CADE
Need any help?

CORA
I'm pretty strong, I think can
manage.

CADE
I mean with finding the food.

Cora looks down at her empty paper plate.

CORA
This will do me. Vegan.

CADE
Well when you fancy something else
don't hesitate to ask. Might even
be able to get you some napkins.
I'm Cade. Camp lackey.

He holds out his hand, Cora looks at it.

CORA
sorry, don't do that anymore.

She points to a sticky label on her coat with her name.

CORA (CONT'D)
Cora. Germaphobe.

CADE
Roughing it in a forest?

Cora shrugs.

CADE (CONT'D)
Too cool for a handshake? What are
you really here for?

(CONTINUED)

CORA
A holiday I guess.

CADE
yeah, but what are you *here* for?
Corking the sauce, anger
management?

Cora stares at Cade

CADE (CONT'D)
Healing Wilds. Adventure therapy.

She continues to look at him as if he's speaking in tongues.

CADE (CONT'D)
Nothing?

Elliot roars feebly behind Cora it startles her regardless.
Elliot removes the head of his suit.

ELLIOT
Me again. You thought I was a bear
didn't you. Oh I got you good. Take
a seat Cora we're about to choose
sides.

CORA
Sides?

EXT. CAMPFIRE DUSK

Tree logs surround a large camp fire, people begin filling
them sat with paper plates of finger food. Elliot stands in
the center with his burly father LARRY [50's, militant] and
younger brother HARRY.

ELLIOT
Shuffle round, there's enough room
for everyone.

LARRY
Sit down and listen up! If I call
your name you are in A Team with
myself and Harry, my son here. The
rest have to be Elliot's.

ELLIOT
His favourite son.
(Whispers)
Sssh Don't tell Har-

Larry talks over Elliot.

(CONTINUED)

LARRY

If you hear your name, wait over there and be ready to move camp over the river.

Joe raises his hand.

JOE

How exactly? I'm not a strong swimmer.

LARRY

We will cross that bridge when we come to it!

As Larry reads out names it becomes apparent that Cora is one by one being left with the kids that are picked last.

LARRY (cont'd)

Ok that's everyone. Move out!

Elliot spreads his arms wide to motion for a hug as Larry walks away without a word.

Cade, Joe, Becky, Gracie and Cora are the only ones remaining. Elliot signals over MINDY [24, quiet observer and problem fixer] to join him in the center with a large box. He appears to be speaking to her in Chinese but really isn't.

ELLIOT

Now that you're all in the *Beta* team. Wink. You all get one of these.

Elliot takes the box from MINDY and bows. He unveils a brown hoodie with 'Camp-anion' printed across the back of each one the group respond with a groan, none of them share Elliot's feelings.

Becky slaps Joe on the arm.

BECKY

This is your fault. I can't swim boo hoo.

CADE

Not really my colour bro

ELLIOT

Looks like we have a few negative Nancy's. Where's the team spirit guys.

(CONTINUED)

Everyone begins shouting over each other, Becky at Joe, Gracie at Elliot, and Cade to no one in general but he just wants to join in.

Cora stands up and collects a hoodie from the box.

CORA

Saves my stuff from getting dirty.

The verbal assault stops and attention turns to Cora.

CORA (CONT'D)

Cut the man some slack we're barely one night in and all his done is offer us some warm clothing? What's there to moan about. It's the same over there, if not worse.

CADE

A Team get the spa and cabins.

CORA

They get what!

The shouting starts again. Elliot sings Kumbaya to calm everyone. The bickering fades. Elliot continues singing hopeful that others will join in. They don't. As he goes for another verse Huang begin speaking. Her voice is soft and she has an accent but her words are clear. Elliot nods along to her speech.

MINDY

Whatever your reasons for being here are, we are all here for a reason. It is here that we can start a change within us, but only if we allow ourselves to do so. Forget the means by which the end is attained. Persevere and work together.

Elliot thinks a translation is needed though no one seemed to have trouble understanding her.

ELLIOT

A single fish makes no river and one feather doesn't make a bird. I think we can all take something from Weng Yue's message.

CORA

That's not what she said.

(CONTINUED)

ELLIOT

I know you're smart, Cora but I did study Mandarin for a term in school so I know a thing or two about proverbs.

EXT. CAMP GROUND - NIGHT

It's growing dark fast. In an open space between trees the group are gathered waiting to be assigned a place to sleep.

ELLIOT

Did everyone take note of where the cabins are when they arrived.

There are murmured variations of 'yes' and 'think so'

ELLIOT (CONT'D)

Please keep clear they are a safety hazard. Thank you. Now who knows how to pitch a tent?

Joe raises his hand tentatively.

ELLIOT (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Great. Joe you come over here with me. Cade you can help Becky, and Cora you can build yours next to Gracie.

Cora collects her equipment and brings a second set over to Gracie sat in a folding chair.

CORA

This is just for *tonight*?

GRACIE

If not I'll make him eat every inch of that costume thread by thread.

Gracie's intent gaze unsettles Cora, she immediately opens out a page of instructions and begins assembling the tent.

CORA

Ok, it doesn't look too hard. So we take pole A and put it together like this. Then do the same with B.

Cora look over at Gracie who's now whittling a stick.

EXT. CAMP GROUND - NIGHT

SUPER: 5 Tents Later.

The only light comes from a torch in Gracie's hand. Cora has finished pitching her tent but is having trouble helping Gracie with hers.

CORA
Could you hold it on this part
here? I can't seem to thread it
through.

Gracie is in the way and keeps shining the light into Cora's eyes.

GRACIE
I've set whole camps up in the time
it takes you to do one.

Cora is biting her tongue.

GRACIE (CONT'D)
I'm telling you it's the wrong way.

CORA
I did mine fine, it's just a bit
more fiddly in the dark.

There's a rustle. Gracie moves the light into the trees.

GRACIE
(whispers)
Chupacabra.

CORA
Nothing's waiting for you. We're
not even in South America. Please
please can you give me the light so
we can just go to sleep.

GRACIE
Who said it wanted me?

Gracie beams the light into Cora's face again, she is swarmed by insects. As Cora swats the air, Gracie attempts to bend the tent pole through the sheet. It Snaps.

GRACIE (CONT'D)
Told you it was the wrong way.

Cora's composure cracks.

(CONTINUED)

CORA

Please tell me that was your hip.

Gracie shakes her head.

GRACIE

Wouldn't expect anything more from
something made in China.

Cora takes the torch and makes her way over to Elliot's
tent. We can hear shuffling.

CORA

Psst Elliot.

The tent stills.

ELLIOT (O.S)

(whispers)

I'm ready.

CORA

Do you have any spare tent poles?

Elliot breathes a sigh of relief.

ELLIOT (O.S)

Cora?

The tent unzips. Elliot pokes his head out in a face mask.

CORA

Are there any extra parts for the
tent, or tape? Gracie's broke.

Elliot looks left then right surveying the area.

ELLIOT

Not till tomorrow.

Elliot zips the tent back up.

CORA

What about now?

ELLIOT (O.S)

You've got yourself a bunkmate.

On her way back to the tent Cora can hear leaves crunching.
She stops. The crunching gets louder. Cora turns with the
torch to see Cade. Cora jumps.

(CONTINUED)

CORA
I thought you were something else.

CADE
Like a badger?

CORA
Yeah...something like that.

CADE
Hungry yet?

CORA
Starving actually.

Cora follows cade over to his tent. He rummages inside and produces a bag of marshmallows.

EXT. CAMP GROUND - MOMENTS LATER

Cora and Cade sit around a small fire roasting the marshmallows on sticks.

CORA
So now I'm here while my team
fumbles about. All to prove I'm not
a liability. Makes perfect sense.

Cora prods at the ground

CORA (cont'd)
...I think they've already made
their decision.

CADE
So go back there and prove them
wrong. Make sure you return with an
idea that blows theirs out of the
water.

Cora smiles at Cade's sentiment.

An animal growls. Cade throws a blanket over the fire. They hold their breath. Wind plays on the trees. Cora and Cade whisper to eachother.

CORA
Why would you do that?

CADE
It was a reflex. I don't know, to
not give away our position.

(CONTINUED)

CORA

We're not at war. Animals have
night vision.

There's a rustling of leaves. A torch clicks on and
illuminates a bear head.

Cade and Cora scream.

Becky lowers the head laughing. Cade swipes the blanket from
the floor and reignites the fire with a tissue and lighter.

BECKY

Afraid of the dark are we?

Gracie has crept up behind Becky.

BECKY (CONT'D)

We don't get bears in England,
guys.

Gracie's voice booms in Becky's ear.

GRACIE

There's other beasts.

Becky screams.

Joe bounds from his tent.

JOE

Beck!

Joe is wearing nothing but his brown hoodie. Upon seeing the
group huddled round the fire he pulls down his jumper to
cover his modesty.

Something brushes past his feet, he freaks out and runs
towards them.

The group recoil.

JOE

It touched me!

Joe cowers next to Becky. Gracie brandishes a small spear
that she's carved.

ELLIOT (O.S)

Who's dying out here?

Elliot joins the commotion.

(CONTINUED)

JOE

I'm serious, something just tried
to grab me.

BECKY

Stop it, you're scaring me.

CORA

Something?

The floor rustles once again. The group freeze. Something circles them. Becky shines her torch into the dark. Gracie pulls a tin of lighter fluid from her pocket.

A badger runs through the beam at them.

GRACIE

Chupacabra!

Gracie sprays lighter fluid into the flames which erupt towards Cora.

FREEZE FRAME

CORA (V.O)

Nan also used to say 'you can't
argue with crazy.

EXT. CAMP ENTRANCE - DAY

Cora is on a bench talking with Mel over the Phone.

CORA

I'm covered in bites and I can
still smell burnt hair.

INT. OFFICE CAFE - SAME TIME

Mel stirs a coffee watching Daniel eat lunch at the other end of the room.

Daniel takes a few sauce satchets back to his table. He squeezes on onto his plate.

MEL

Now it's ketchup. Can you believe
the cheek of this guy?

INTERCUT between Cora and Mel

Cora is applying cream to her bug bites.

(CONTINUED)

CORA

Says the woman spying on said guy

Mel is still stirring her drink.

MEL

I'm not spying, it's reviewing. I don't want to work with a crazy person.

CORA

I think you need to step back and assess the situation before deciding who's the nut.

MEL

Yeah yeah. So, aside from nearly losing your eyebrows how was your first night?

CORA

Could've been worse.

MEL

Really?

CORA

hmm..Probably not.

Mindy is walking down the path towards Cora.

MEL

The sugar as well? No!

Daniel looks round to see Mel he hurries away. Mel makes chase.

MEL (cont'd)

I've got to go. Remember my offer still stands.

(to Daniel)

I just want to talk!

Mindy sits down beside Cora

CORA

Hi. Weng Yue, right?

MINDY

Actually it's Mindy.

(CONTINUED)

CORA

Oh ok but your parents call you
Weng Yue?

Mindy shakes her head. Elliot walks up the path calling out
to Mindy in 'Chinese'.

CORA (CONT'D)

Why does he call you that?

MINDY

He's a very strange man but I like
this job so I've stopped correcting
him.

Elliot is still calling out to her.

CORA

What's he saying?

ELLIOT

Nǐ yīzhí shì wǒ de gǒu ma?

Subtitle: *Have you been my dog?* Mindy shrugs.

MINDY

I don't know, I'm Japanese.